

Snoqualmie Indian Tribe Voters Guide | Suzan DelBene Full Responses

DelBene is running for U.S. House of Representatives District 1

Do you have experience working with tribes?

Yes. Washington's First District includes five tribes: the Lummi Nation, Nooksack, Sauk Suiattle, Stillaguamish, and Upper Skagit Indian Tribes, along with many other tribes in the surrounding area. I've consistently met with the tribes I represent, both in Washington DC and in the district.

If you were elected, how would you and your staff interact with tribes?

It has been an honor, during my time in Congress, to be welcomed into the tribal communities I represent. I have greatly enjoyed touring their communities and learning about the issues most important to them. I am working with our tribes to help them prosper by crafting long-term strategies to identify the hurdles tribal economies face and lay out a clear roadmap to overcome them.

What is your position on tribal sovereignty?

I support and respect tribal self governance and tribal jurisdiction, and take very seriously the trust responsibility that the federal government has to protect tribal treaty rights. I stepped in to expedite a fishery disaster declaration for a tribe in my district as a result of the negative effects of climate change. Last Congress, I also introduced the Indian Country Economic Revitalization Act (H.R. 4699) to identify the barriers and develop solutions towards achieving long-term economic prosperity in Indian Country. I am also a cosponsor of legislation to reverse the Carcieri Supreme Court decision, which would restore the status quo prior to the decision and clarifies the Secretary's authority to place land into trust for all tribes -- regardless of the date of their federal recognition.

Would you support the Tribe in its duty to protect sacred Snoqualmie Falls? If so, how?

It was my privilege to visit Snoqualmie Falls with Chairwoman Lubenau and other members of the Council recently, to gain a better understanding of why the land is sacred to the Snoqualmie Tribe. I have also had many conversations with the Muckleshoot Tribe as well as the Army Corps of Engineers, to ensure everyone has the necessary information and to promote a greater dialogue between all parties involved.

Do you support increasing funding to tribes for treaty-guaranteed services such as education and health care?

Yes.

What is your position on the collection of tax, on tribal lands?

We need to create incentives for investment on tribal lands and fix the broken legal framework undermining economic growth. The authority to collect taxes is critical to a strong economy and healthy and prosperous citizenry, and it's no different in Indian country. I helped introduce the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act (H.R. 3043) last Congress, and supported it when it passed into law. It clarifies that payments, programs or services provided by tribal governments for the general welfare of their people are excluded from federal income tax. Further, I respect the status of land taken into trust, which is exempt from state and local taxation.

Would you support tribal representation in the Federal level?

Yes.